

77-93
177-8491

20 May 1977

Executive Registry
177-8491

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Establishment of Staff of Internal Organization Development Specialists or Consultants

REFERENCE: Notes from the Director No. 1

Background

1. In September 1976 I submitted an Employee Suggestion recommending the establishment of a Staff of Internal Organization Development consultants, or specialists, to provide management, from the Directorate level down through the Branch or even Section level, with internal resources for diagnostic and consultative services to any unit at any level for those areas of management that fall within the scope of Organization Development. Some of the areas that typically fall within the scope of OD are: action research; survey and feedback; organizational renewal; team building; affirmative action; vertical and lateral communications; conflict management; role clarification, role negotiation, job enrichment; career planning; interpersonal competence acquisition; and MBO.

2. I feel in retrospect that I chose the wrong forum, in that my intent was to propose an idea or concept for management to consider for development into a dynamic management process tool. I had no thoughts or desire to quantify or try to relate the concept to the traditional monetary reward format with which most employee suggestions are processed.

Critique and Clarification

3. After reviewing the evaluations of my Employee Suggestion #77-93 I am convinced not only of the applicability but the need for a dynamic management tool such as an internal staff of organization development specialists. The two evaluations of my suggestion, one by OP and one by DDA, were completely at odds in their perceptions of Organization Development. OP based their response on the premise that

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OD is only applicable in a centralized form of management whereas the DDA response assumed the premise that its applicability is to decentralized management. OD is in fact used in industry and the federal government in both managerial cultures. Organization Development is a dynamic process, providing a mechanism to continually sense and assess an organization's culture and ascertain if there is a need for change and if so, what change. There are several premises on which OD is based, two are: that there is always room for improvement or adjustment in an organization; and given that the external world is constantly changing, it is better to deal with change as an ongoing dynamic process rather than waiting for problems to develop or a crisis to arise and then resorting to corrective or catch-up action.

4. Warren Bennis (president, University of Cincinnati) and Wendell French (professor, University of Washington) define Organization Development as a long range effort to improve an organization's problem solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative management of organizational culture, with the assistance of a change agent, or catalyst, and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research. It is a complex educational strategy intended to inculcate or reinforce beliefs, attitudes, values, and structures of organizations to enable them to better adapt to new technologies, markets, requirements, challenges, and the dizzying rate of change itself.

5. The DDA evaluation adequately refutes the OP evaluation, and on the whole presents more supportive data to the suggestion than it does data to support its recommendation to decline the suggestion. Some examples are: "systematically apply behavioral science principles--to improve the extent to which the organization accomplishes its goals or carries out its mission"; "OD is a dynamic process providing a mechanism to continually recognize and reduce deficiencies--on the premise that however effective and organization may perform, it could be improved"; (can't we improve?) "Although OD concepts are applicable for large organizations, such as the CIA, the focus of OD is usually toward components such as Offices, Divisions, or Branches. (exactly what I suggested)

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"The consultant (their assumption is external, my suggestion is internal) works with organizational members in identifying key problem areas (e.g., group interaction, lateral communications), what changes are desired, how change should be implemented, and how resultant change should be assessed." "OD is consistent with a decentralized form of management such as that within the Agency."

6. The evaluation then proceeds to identify several individual things the Agency does, "consistent with the basic tenets of OD" e.g., attitude surveys, the creative leadership seminar (under development), the [redacted] seminars, the Managerial Grid course, assessment centers, MBO. The closing paragraph starts with "In conclusion, the framework for an OD effort already exists within the Agency."

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7. Many of these same areas and problems are identified in the report on two seminars on Creativity and Ethics in CIA published by the Center for the Study of Intelligence, OTR.

8. Some of the issues raised by the Seminar on Creativity and Ethics in CIA (17-18 January 1977) are those that lend themselves to an Organization Development effort and demonstrate that senior level officers of the Agency recognize the need for improvement, adjustment, and change. Some examples are:

- a. better vertical and cross-Directorate communications in CIA;
- b. elimination of the bureaucratic isolation of office-level components across Directorates;
- c. clarification of the aims, goals, and purposes of the Agency;
- d. stressing those parts of MBO perceived as lacking in the Agency, i.e., sense of participation and better vertical communications;
- e. clarification of expectations;

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- f. broadening of decision making process;
- g. more interdisciplinary and team approaches;
- h. Better recognition of creative initiatives;
- i. better feedback, i.e., more;
- j. zero-based management review of organizational tasks, methods, and management processes.

9. In conclusion, I would address the prevalent myth that OD is only practiced by Organizational Psychologists. The US Army develops its own internal OD specialists for its current programs in MILPERCEN , DESPERS, FORSCOM, and 82nd Airborne to name a few I'm personally aware of. The US Navy does much the same thing for its Human Resource Development centers. Most of those entering the field of Organization Development as practitioners are now coming out of graduate programs in OD. There is a growing number of Federal employees moving into the field of OD through the two local graduate programs at American and George Washington Universities. There is an informal network of practicing OD specialists representing 9 or 10 different agencies that meet monthly under the sponsorship of the CSC. The Bureau of Navy Personnel is currently in the process of establishing a job description for organization development specialists. The development of our own staff of internal organization development specialists would require the assistance of an external Organization Development Consultant with experience in helping to establish an Internal Staff. There are many prominent OD consultants with the capabilities and commensurate experience.

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Attachments:

- A - Employee Suggestion #77-93
- B - OP Evaluation
- C - DDA Evaluation

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